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SUBJECT: Bi-weekly Review - February 9 through 28

POLITICAL

Minimum Wage Issue (UNCLASSIFIED)

Although primarily economic in character, the Federal Northern and Eastern Regional Courts' announcement of minimum wage rates for unskilled daily paid labor has dominated the political scent during a relatively quiet fortnight. Summary details of the wage increases are discussed under "LABOR" below.

COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

The Federal, Northern and Eastern Governments have set daily wages for their employees considerably below the five shilling minimum established by the Western Region on October 1, 1954. With cries of "fraud, treachery, and betrayal of the workers" the Action Group has termed the announcements an NCNC sell-out of the laboring men.

how about discussed?

Retirement of Governor-General (UNCLASSIFIED)

Sir John MACPHERSON has completed his farewell visits to the Northern and Western Regional capitals and will travel to Enugu and Tike during the coming week. In both capitals his farewell addresses stressed the importance to Nigeria of decreasing inter-tribal animosities. He also disclosed his plans to visit South and East Africa before returning to the U.K. in August.

COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

The Governor was received with more cordiality and official enthusiasm in the North than in the West. Although met by AWOLOWO, the Western Regional Governor and representative local ministers, Sir John received no testimonial dinners or public accolades in Ibadan such as were tendered him at Kaduna.

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Although Sir John's successor has not yet been officially announced, the name of H.M.FOOT, former Chief Secretary of Nigeria and presently Governor of Jam a. has been the most frequently mentioned by government offi Most government officials whom the Consulate has questioned der Foot an acute and polished administrator and a high calib hoice for the position.

Installation of Ibadan Oba (UNCLASSIFIED)

Considerable political tension in the Western Region resulted from the recent death of the Olubadan of Ibadan. Unlike the deceased Oba, who had been an NCNC supporter, his successor, Chief I. B. AKINYELE, is a mission-educated, non-political moderate who has been senior judge of the Ibadan native authority courts and pastor of a Methodist church.

Although it was clear that Akinyele was entitled to the vacant throne, the NCNC faction, under the leadership of Federal Minister Adegobe ADELABU, who is also chief of the NCNC-dominated Ibadan District Council, engineered the installation of another chief as Olubadan on the same day that Akinyele's appointment was announced. Charges and countercharges were exchanged by the AG and NCNC press during the following week. Police reinforcements were dispatched to Ibadan, but there was no serious disturbance at the formal installation of Akinyele on February 18.

COMMENT (UNCLASSIFIED)

It is difficult to understand the NCNC tactics. By installing an illegal pretender they weakened their chances to dissuade Akinyele (who was reportedly loath to enter the political fray) from accepting the Obaship. Because of its hasty approval of the NCNC pretender, the Ibadan District Council will be forced to reverse itself and actually serve under Akinyele. Further, the Western chiefs are not likely to be impressed by the NCNC's insouciant interferance in chieftainship matters.

Committee to Investigate Corruption in East (UNCLASSIFIED)

The outcry against local government malfeasance in the Eastern Region continues (D-117, Feb. 16, 1955, p.4). The Eastern Regional Government has now appointed a committee of three private citizens to consider the problem of bribery and corruption in all branches of public life in Eastern Nigeria. Under its terms of reference, the committee will visit various divisions to hold public hearings but is apparently unauthorized to record or endorse charges against any particular individual.

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The Eastern Region has also announced that it will present a bill at the next session of the Eastern House giving its Minister of Internal Affairs sole power to dissolve local government councils in the Region.

COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

The committee does not appear to have an effective instrument since it has not been constituted a Commission of Inquiry and consequently cannot swear its witnesses.

The new bill promises to be as unpopular as it is necessary since it indicates increased interference by the Regional government in local affairs.

Proposed Changes in Eastern Judiciary (UNCLASSIFIED)

In announcing the introduction of two bills to establish a High Court and a Magistrates Court, the Eastern Region has announced its intention to change the present restriction that land cases must be introduced in the Native Courts. Since land cases constitute the major court load and are usually appealed to a Magistrate's Court, the bills provide that they may be initiated in any Regional Court. The High Court will consider appeals from the Magistrates Courts in civil cases involving £10 or more and in criminal actions where the fine imposed exceeds £5.

Appointment of NCNC Administrative Secretary (UNCLASSIFIED)

Chief Gogo ABBEY has been appointed Administrative Secretary of the NCNC. Mr. D. G. NWAFOR, NCNC Organizing Secretary at Ababaliki, criticized the appointment as one which satisfied a "privileged few" at the expense of the majority of party members. He stated that the appointment was one which should have been made at the party's forthcoming annual convention rather than by the National Executive Committee.

COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

Nwafor's remarks constitute another indication of unrest among NCNC lieutenants (D-117, Feb. 16, p.3). Mr. Abbey, a journalist from the Eastern Rivers Province, has not previously had active political experience. He was apparently chosen to increase party support from his native district rather than as a reward for services rendered the NCNC.

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Resignation of NCNC Northern Secretary (UNCLASSIFIED

Malam H. R. ABDALLAH, member of the NCNC Executive Committee and party Organizing Secretary for the Northern Region, has announced his resignation from the party.

COMMENT (UNCLASSIFIED)

Although no reasons for the resignation were given, the NCNC has recently shown more interest in cooperating with the NPC than in supporting the cause of its NEPU Northern allies.

Proposed Rivers - Calabar - Ogoja - State (UNCLASSIFIED)

A conference has been organized by Eastern opposition leaders to discuss the formulation of a separate Eastern state. The conference is scheduled to be held at Uyo on February 26 and will be attended by delegates from the area, as well as representatives of the Action Group and United National Independence Party.

Proposed Increase in Salaries of Federal Ministers and Representatives (UNCLASSIFIED)

The Council of Ministers has indicated that it intends to introduce a bill in the forthcoming Federal Budget Session to increase ministerial salaries from the present £2000 or £2500 to £2250 and £3000, respectively. House members emoluments will be increased £350 from their present £400.

COMMENT (UNCLASSIFIED)

The announcement was unfortunately timed in that it coincided with the announcement of Federal minimum wage levels.

Return of Commissioner of the Cameroons (UNCLASSIFIED)

Brigadier E. J. GIBBONS, Commissioner of the Cameroons under UN trusteeship, has returned to his post after attending the 14th meeting of the UN Trusteeship Council (D-103, Jan. 22, 1955).

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LABOR

Announcement of Federal and Regional Minimum Wage Levels (UNCLASSIFIED)

With the announcement of the minimum wages to be paid the employees of the Federal and Eastern Regional Governments, all daily paid government employees in Nigeria are now included.

The minimum daily wage rates by area are now:

(a) Federal district (Lagos) 4/- (previously 3/5d).

(b) Western Regional Government employees 5/-; Federal employees in the Western Region from 2/7d to 3/5d, depending upon the locality (approximately a 15% increase).

(c) Northern Region: From 1/6d to 2/5d depending upon the geographical area.

(d) Eastern Region: From 2/3d to 4/9d depending upon locality.

Federal, Northern and Eastern rates are retroactive to November 1, 1954. The Western Regional Government rate became effective October 1, 1954.

All rates represent at least a 10% increase over those previously in force. It is estimated that the annual additional cost of the new schedules will be: Western Region nearly £500,000, Federal Region £250,000, Northern Region £50,000, and Eastern Region £80,000.

In announcing that the Federal Government would not follow the Western Region's example of a 5/- minimum, the Council of Ministers cited the Government-appointed Fact Finding Committee's report and stated that a country-wide daily wage of 5/- would seriously endanger the economic development of the country and would fail to bring the wage earner a marked improvement in his standard of living.

After extended conversations with the Federal Minister of Labor both before and after the wage announcement, the All Nigeria Trade Union Federation (ANTUF) issued a statement on February 23, rejecting the minimum wage awards and reiterating its previous demand that a minimum daily wage of 9/- should be established throughout Nigeria. In its statement, the Federation claimed that the new wage levels were inadequate to meet the present cost of living and maintained that both Regional Governments and private employers were financially able to pay a 9/- wage.

COMMENT

COMMENT (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

In its report, the Federal Committee frankly stated that it considered the Western Region's rates to be statistically and economically unjustified, i.e., politically motivated.

It is probable that one of the causes for the long delay in announcing the new rates was to allow the Federal Government time to observe the effects of the Western Regional Government increases on employment conditions in the Western Region. In practice neither private employers, Native Authorities or local Government bodies increased their wages to equal those paid Regional Government employees.

ANTUF has found itself in an extremely embarrassing position. Although many of its responsible leaders are reported to have been sympathetic to the cost of living approach of the Federal and Eastern Governments, the pressure on certain member unions influenced its advocacy of the clearly unrealistic 9/- level.

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ECONOMIC

FOA Visit to Nigeria

Dr. George ADAMS, U.S. Public Health Officer, arrived February 27 to discuss with Nigerian authorities health projects being proposed for FOA assistance. His discussions will be confined to those with authorities of the Federal Government and the Eastern Regional Government as no technical assistance for health projects has been requested by the Western or Northern Regional Governments. The Federal Government has proposed a project for dental research and the Eastern Regional Government desires assistance in tuberculosis research. Dr. Adams will consider the feasibility of the proposed projects and assist the Nigerian authorities to formulate their applications for assistance. He will also be available to discuss further projects which may be proposed.

Operations of Marketing Boards

Cotton (Western Region) (Unclassified)

Minimum prices for Ishan native seed cotton to be purchased at all buying stations in the Western Region have been announced by the Western Region Marketing Board. The prices for the 1954-55 season, compared with prices for the 1953-54 season, are:

Grade	Pence per lb. 1954-55	1953-54
Grade I.N.1	6¼	6
Grade I.N.2	6	5¾
Grade I.N.3	5½	5½

Comment: (Unclassified)

The increased spread between the lowest and the higher grades is planned to encourage the production of better quality cotton. The greater part of the cotton grown in the Western Region has been of lowest grade. Cotton is a minor crop in the Western Region.

Cotton (Northern Region) (Unclassified)

Northern Region Cotton Purchases during January were 48,689 tons. Total purchases for the 1954-55 season since the beginning of the season are 64,141 tons.

Groundnuts (Northern Region) (Unclassified)

Northern Region purchases of Groundnuts during January were

49,505 tons. Total purchases since the beginning of the 1954-55 season are 332,910 tons.

Palm Produce (Unclassified)

Total palm produce purchases from all regions during January were as follows:

Palm Kernels	16,135 tons
Technical Oil	1,538 tons
Special Grade Oil	2,167 tons

The season opened December 31, 1954. The great bulk of palm produce comes from the Eastern Region.

Cocoa (Unclassified)

Cocoa purchases in all regions for the two week period ending February 17 were 2,867 tons of main crop and 554 tons of light crop. Total purchases for the season are 72,484 tons of which 66,455 tons are main crop and 6,029 tons are light crop. Purchases continue at low level and it is estimated that the total for the 1954-55 season will not exceed 78 to 80 thousand tons.

Air Transportation (Unclassified)

All West African Airways Corporation's aircraft have been grounded for overhaul and modification. Although this action followed closely after the fatal crash of a Bristol Wayfarer on February 5, it was officially emphasized that there was no connection between the two. According to a public announcement by WAAC the grounding applies to all Dove and Wayfarer aircraft throughout the world. All Dove aircraft are being withdrawn for overhaul and modification after 5,000 flying hours and all Wayfarers after 5,000 hours. WAAC operations are not expected to resume before at least another week.

Inquiry into Lagos Rentals (Unclassified)

It is reported that the Federal Government is to set up a board of inquiry to examine the adequacy of housing available to workers in Lagos and to examine the rentals paid. The board will consist of representatives of the Lagos Town Council, the Lagos Executive Development Board, trade unions and landlords.

Comment: (Official Use Only)

Housing in Lagos has long been completely inadequate. There

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has been little building of African housing for many years and the situation has been aggravated by a trend of movement of people from the bush to the city. The Lagos Executive Development Board has formulated plans for slum clearance in Lagos which undoubtedly over the long term would ease congestion and benefit the city immensely. The scheme has developed into a political football and little has actually been accomplished to put it into operation. Following the recent Federal Government wage pronouncement there has been agitation for rent control by the press, political leaders and trade unions. It is not improbable that the board of inquiry will recommend some form of rent control.

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Miscellaneous Office Activities (UNCLASSIFIED)

During the period under review the Consulate General received the following noteworthy visitors:

Mr. Dayton HULL, Department of State. Mr. Hull's visit concerned allowance and differential problems.

Messrs. J. HEMPHILL, W. P. B. WREGG, D. E. HEGARTY, and P. J. ZEMAN representing U.S. chocolate manufacturers.

Mr. Charles DRESBACK, Foreign Production Division, Gulf Oil Corporation.

Dr. L. SAUNDERS, Chief of Medical Department, Socony-Vacuum Oil Company.

Mr. Max KLEIN, President, American Chamber of Commerce, Barcelona, Spain.

Dr. George ADAMS, U.S. Public Health Officer (See ECONOMIC, above)

Edward D. McLaughlin
American Consul General

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